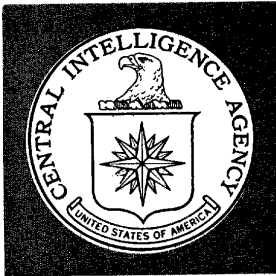


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WEEKLY VIETNAM INDICATORS

Week Ending 2 October 1971

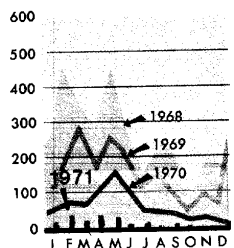
NSA Declassification/Release instructions on File.

For the President Only

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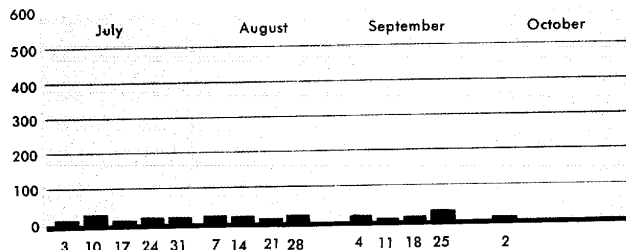
SOUTH VIETNAM WEEKLY INDICATORS

1968-1971
Weekly average for each month



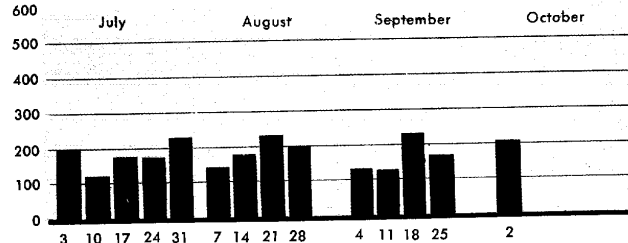
JULY 1971 - OCTOBER 1971
Weekly data as reported

US BATTLE DEATHS



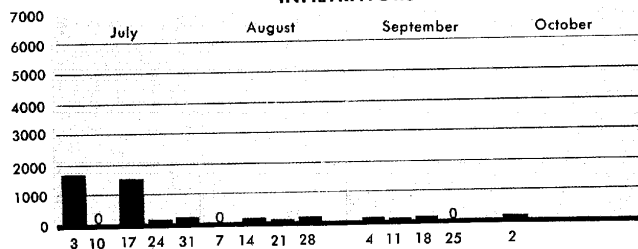
decreased to 19 from the 29 of last week.

SOUTH VIETNAMESE BATTLE DEATHS



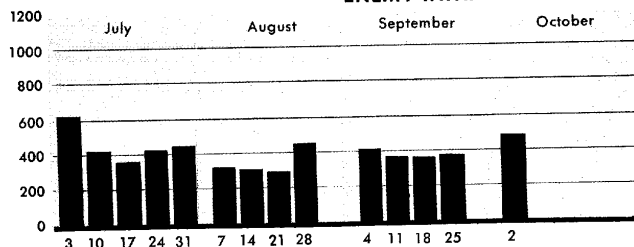
rose to 212 from last week's 163. The official total will change as late reports are received and will be lower than the figures released to the press by the GVN.

INFILTRATORS DETECTED IN PIPELINE



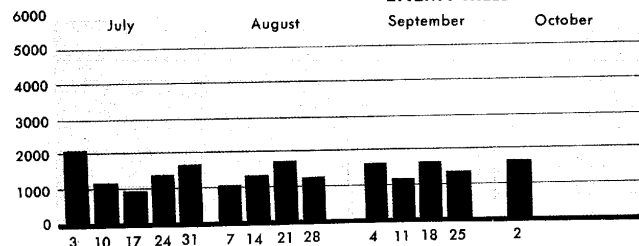
stand at two small, special purpose groups with 21 personnel. The infiltration estimate since 1 October 1970 remains at some 75,800 - 77,300.

ENEMY-INITIATED INCIDENTS



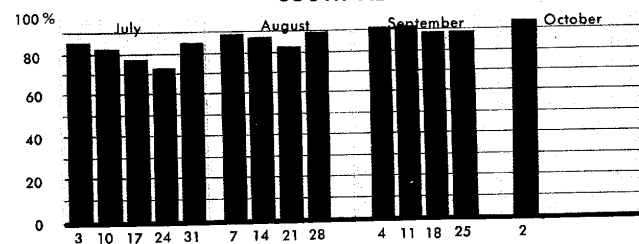
climbed from last week's 389 to 506 -- the highest total in three months.

ENEMY KILLED IN ACTION



rose sharply to 1,739 from the 1,331 of last week.

SOUTH VIETNAMESE EFFECTIVENESS



as measured by the percentage of enemy killed by GVN forces increased from last week's 87% to 96% -- the highest level since March.

Statistics for the latest week shown are preliminary

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Enemy Activity

In South Vietnam, enemy-initiated activity was at generally low levels except for an ineffectual swell of enemy attacks by fire over the weekend to harass the Presidential election. In northwestern Tay Ninh Province of South Vietnam's Military Region (MR) 3, moderately heavy attacks by fire accompanied by limited ground probes have continued for the second week against Allied positions. This fighting seems to be coordinated with that currently going on near Krek in central Kompong Cham Province, Cambodia, where the Communists are endeavoring to destroy or dislodge ARVN forces and reopen infiltration corridors into MR 3. Although there are some indications that there may be an increase in enemy activity throughout the country during the coming week, there is little to suggest that any major upsurge is imminent.

There are tenuous indications in communications intelligence which suggest that [REDACTED] in north Laos may have been expanded by three new regiments -- some 11,000 personnel. Whether or not the number of engineer troops has actually increased, the current activity of [REDACTED] just south of Muong Houn indicates that they are endeavoring to extend their Beng River Valley road through to Pak Beng on the Mekong. Elsewhere in Laos, friendly forces have expanded their area of control around the former neutralist headquarters of Muong Soui near the Plaine des Jarres. To the south, friendly forces have lost ground at Muong Phalane, where enemy artillery rockets have made their appearance, and northeast of Paksong, where the enemy has counterattacked.

During the week in Cambodia, military activity continued at moderate levels, with the Communists often seizing the initiative. The Communists' new activity is probably a prelude to dry season efforts to erase gains made by the government during the current wet season. The Communists have been particularly active in the Krek area, where they have been pressuring ARVN units with attacks by fire. Their apparent objective, so far unrealized, is to cut off and destroy the ARVN task force operating near Krek. In an effort to demoralize Phnom Penh's civilian population and demonstrate a capability to strike anywhere at will, the Communists have conducted four terrorist attacks in the city since 28 September, killing one civilian and wounding 16 others. The Communists are also continuing to hit government positions along major lines of communications in their efforts to harass and slow traffic to and from the capital.

Enemy Infiltration

The apparent lull in infiltration continued as our accounting year for personnel infiltration (1 October 1970 - 30 September 1971) drew to a close, with only two small, special purpose groups detected during the week. The number of personnel estimated to have moved southward toward South Vietnam-Cambodia since 1 October 1970, therefore, remains at some 75,800 - 77,300 and is not significantly higher than the 70,100 - 71,600 estimate for the comparable 1969-70 period. While no hard evidence of heavy personnel or truck movement has, as yet, been noted, references to preparations for the coming season continue to be reflected in the enemy's communications. The conferences, inspections and construction of lines of communications and petroleum pipelines, "crash" transportation offensives, general expansion of rear services activities southward in Laos, and the movement of large volumes of supplies into southern North Vietnam are all reminiscent of the pattern of activity preceding last year's dry season push which began in mid-October.

South Vietnam Developments

Official GVN reports available at this writing assert that 87.7% of the eligible electorate voted in the 3 October Presidential election and that Thieu received 91.5% of the votes cast. If these figures are accurate, Thieu was endorsed by about 80% of the total electorate. These figures almost certainly reflect some measure of lily gilding, but unless the books were fiddled far more openly and extensively than present evidence suggests, the basic result was

probably not fabricated. Even allowing for certain excesses of provincial zeal, pro-Thieu votes were almost certainly cast by well over two-thirds of the eligible electorate.

This high pro-Thieu vote and, particularly, the very high voter turn-out has given Thieu the "majority" mandate he was clearly determined to achieve. Whatever were the actual participation or vote totals, Thieu's Communist and non-Communist opponents clearly failed in their efforts to generate a boycott. Thieu's strong showing should put him in an excellent position to mend his fences -- if he is so minded -- with various political groups including the Catholic hierarchy and other normally pro-GVN elements who disliked the way Thieu handled the election and have shown varying degrees of reluctance in supporting his policies.

The high turn-out can be partly explained by the strenuous efforts of the GVN's administrative apparatus, at all levels, to get out the vote. The voters themselves were probably impelled by a variety of motives: a sense of duty, a felt need to conform to the GVN's express desire for participation, and a fear of future harassment by local authorities if one did not vote. The level of participation, hence, is not necessarily indicative of universal attachment to the electoral process nor can the number of pro-Thieu votes cast be reliably read as a true measure of his support. On the other hand, neither the participation level nor the voting patterns can be dismissed out of hand as meaningless.

The smoothness with which the election was conducted and the degree of voter participation both attest to the GVN's increased administrative efficiency. In the rural areas, Thieu does have a substantial measure of general support engendered by widespread prosperity, better security, increased village autonomy, and such tangible benefits as purchasable goods (e.g., Hondas, transistor radios, and Sony televisions), land reform, more equitable taxation and improved agricultural services. Since active opposition to Thieu was concentrated in urban areas, even the urban vote was somewhat higher than might have been expected. Many voters probably felt that the concrete alternative to Thieu is chaos, and some may have reacted negatively to his opponents' resort to violence. In his campaign speeches, Thieu clearly had some success in appealing to nationalistic emotions and the need for adhering to constitutional requirements. He was apparently also successful in sticking Minh and Ky with at least some of the blame for creating a one-slate election by voluntarily withdrawing from the fray.

In spite of a spasm of manifest effort, neither Viet Cong nor dissident-inspired violence materially disrupted the voting. Although the non-Communist opposition has plans to continue its demonstrations in the post-election period, its immediate prospects are poor. The pre-election demonstrations generally fizzled and certainly did not serve as a catalyst for inflaming public opinion. Such demonstrations as did occur were poorly attended, poorly organized, and easily contained by the GVN's police and security forces. Ky's attempt to assume leadership of a unified opposition rallied behind his banner was rebuffed by the An Quang Buddhists and by General Minh's followers. Ky's mercurial approach, his open flirtation with radical leftist elements, and his encouragement of violence has further discredited him. Though minor demonstrations and disorders are likely to continue, Thieu's non-Communist opponents will probably remain in disarray for some time.

Though the GVN has remained in solid control of surface events, the emotions aroused during the election period, particularly in urban areas, will not be all that easy to re-bottle. Whatever be the truth of the matter, the participation totals and number of votes cast for Thieu claimed by the GVN will be regarded with great skepticism by his domestic opponents. Thieu's conciliatory actions, or lack thereof, over the next few weeks will do much to determine whether the 1971 Presidential election becomes a closed issue or a corrosive source of continuing discontent. The Communists are

clearly determined to do all they can by political agitation and military pressure to foster disenchantment with Thieu's government and keep alive the stresses and tensions generated in recent weeks by election-related events.

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